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The American Baptist-Samuel Colgate Historical Library exists to document the life and history of the Baptists. It does not intentionally collect genealogical data. Even so, historical data concerns people, and people are the subject of genealogical study. Therefore, though our purpose is not to be a genealogical library, some of our holdings inevitably will have some genealogical value. To save the researcher time, however, and to keep our small staff from being inundated with research requests which we have no way of answering, we post this information guide for the genealogist.

Genealogists should know that Baptists historically have practiced believer's baptism rather than infant baptism. That is, a person is baptized when he or she professes faith rather than, as in most denominations, soon after birth. Finding record of an ancestor's baptism in a Baptist church, therefore, does not serve to document the birth date or approximate age of the person in question. Further, Baptist records normally record only the person's name and date of baptism. Baptist church records do not record (as other church records often do) date or place of birth, age, names of parents, siblings, or children.

Baptist churches have traditionally not kept marriage records as part of their church records. Some ministers have kept a private log of marriages performed, but this library holds only a handful of such marriage logs. These are not indexed and can only be accessed through the name of the minister, not the names of those married by that minister.

Only a small percentage of Baptist churches have placed their records in research facilities such as ours. We hold some original records of churches affiliated with the American Baptist Churches, USA (formerly the Northern Baptist Convention), the Free Will Baptist General Conference, and the Danish Baptist General Conference of America. For the reasons cited above, we have found that these records are generally not helpful for genealogical research. We must note also that the records which we do hold are indexed only by the name of the local church, not by the names of its members. Further, there is no national, state, or county membership list of Baptists. Membership in Baptist churches is recorded only at the local church. If you do not already know the name of the church to which your ancestor belonged, we have no way of determining that for you. We will not search the records of all Baptist churches in a county or metropolitan area to see if we can find your ancestor.

If your ancestor belonged to or participated in a local Baptist church, it is highly unlikely that we can find any information for you. At best, we could find only that your ancestor had belonged to a given church at a given time, and we could find that only if you know the name of that church and only if the records of that church have been deposited here. If your ancestor played a

prominent role in Baptist life at a state-wide or, more likely, a national level, there is a small chance we might find an obituary (probably very brief) in one of the Baptist periodicals which we hold.

If your ancestor was a Baptist minister (particularly in the North) from the mid-nineteenth century or later or if your ancestor served as a missionary for the American Baptist Missionary Union (later, the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society), the American Baptist Home Mission Society, or the American Baptist Publication Society, there is some chance we might be able to locate an obituary.

If your ancestor served as a pastor or missionary with the Southern Baptists, we advise that you contact one of the various historical societies operated by the Southern Baptists.

Information requests we cannot answer:

Send all the information you have on the *x* family.

I'm looking for the names of the parents of John Doe.

My ancestors got married in a Baptist church in the city of *x*. Can you tell me when?

Information requests we may be able to answer:

My ancestor was a Baptist pastor in New England after the Civil War. Do you have any information on him?

My grandparents served in Africa with the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Please help me locate information about them.

My grandfather graduated from the Rochester Theological Seminary, and I want to know what churches he served.

Research policies: The American Baptist-Samuel Colgate Historical Library is open to the public at no charge (though your tax-deductible donations are gratefully accepted). You are welcome to come to our library and access its holdings. You may also contract with any independent researcher to perform your research for you.

If there is some chance that we hold information which will be helpful to you, we will conduct genealogical research for you at the rate of \$25.00 per hour. We require that the first hour's research be paid in advance (have check or money order made payable to: American Baptist Historical Society). With that first hour's research fee we include up to 20 photocopies at no additional charge. Photocopies in excess of 20 exposures will be charged at a rate of 25¢ per exposure; photocopying orders exceeding 100 exposures will be charged an additional \$10.00 per hour service fee. Be aware that such research is time-consuming and can easily take 3-5 hours. In order to request such research, please print and complete the form below and return it to this library with a check for the first hour's research. We do not advise that you contract for this service prior to having first discussed with library staff what information may be available. We will make our best assessment regarding our chances of locating desired information; however, we cannot guarantee result, and we cannot return research fees if no information is located. Please make your research requests specific, and please provide whatever information you may have regarding the local church or the Baptist agency or mission society involved. Use the form on the next page and mail your form to the address at the top.

American Baptist Historical Society
1100 South Goodman Street
Rochester, NY 14620-2532

Church Records Search Request Form

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Name of person(s) to search for: _____

Name of congregation: _____ City, State: _____

Do you know if the congregation changed its name or merged with another church?

If rural church, it may help to name nearby towns or the county.

Name of association, if known:

Time period for search: _____

Name of mission field served (if applicable): _____

Name of Baptist agency served (if applicable): _____

American Baptist Foreign Mission Society

American Baptist Free Mission Society

American Baptist Home Mission Society

American Baptist Publication Society

Free Will Baptist agencies

Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (Boston)

Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society (Boston)

Women's Baptist Foreign Mission Society (Chicago)

Women's Baptist Home Mission Society (Chicago)

[NOTE: Listing ancestors & descendants does not help us since our records are not organized according to genealogical principles, but please give us as much specific information as you know regarding the person you are searching and/or Baptist churches or agencies involved.]

08/16/2004: e-mail to abhs@crcds.edu

Would it be possible to receive a more detailed description of the church records you hold for the following church:

New Jersey - Wrightstown:

Jacobstown Baptist Church- (MF); 1785-1910

Thank you very much.

Brian A. Smith

American Baptist Historical Society
1100 South Goodman Street
Rochester, NY 14620-2532

Church Records Search Request Form

Your Name: Brian A. Smith
Address: 2014 Valentine Street
City, State, Zip: Los Angeles, CA 90026

Name of person(s) to search for: **SOUTHARD, John & MALSURY, Phebe**

Name of congregation: Wrightstown/Jacobstown
State: New Jersey

Do you know if the congregation changed its name or merged with another church? Don't know
For a rural Church, it may help to name nearby towns or the county.

Name of association, if known: not known

Time period for search: **1795 - 1851**

At least three generations of my SOUTHARD ancestors were buried at Jacobstown Baptist Cemetery. I have included a brief synopsis of the family of John SOUTHARD and Phebe MALSURY. The information I seek, in particular is:

- 1: Any mention of a baptism or other indication of the parents of Phebe MALSURY.
- 2: Any record of the marriage of John SOUTHARD and Phebe MALSURY, circa 1817.
- 3: The first year that John SOUTHARD is found as a member of the church; circa 1816.
- 4: Any indication that Phebe (Malsbury) SOUTHARD is buried in the church cemetery; she died 13 May 1841.
- 5: Any mention of Abel SOUTHARD, father of John, and Louisa (Hopkins) SOUTHARD, Abel's second wife (License issued to Abel SOUTHARD and Louisa HOPKINS on 9 March 1817 in New Hanover Township, married by John EMLEY, Esq.) as members 1816-1840, or of death/burial in church cemetery: Abel died 1830-1840.
- 6: Any notation or mention of the children of John and Phebe SOUTHARD being baptized or as members. (See enclosed synopsis for dates of birth)

Husband's Name:

JOHN SOUTHARD

Born: 11 October 1794 New Haven, Connecticut

Married: 1817-18

Died: 1 September 1851 "Hotel Hill," Burlington County, NJ

Buried: Jacobstown Baptist Cemetery, Jacobstown, NJ

Father: Abel Southard (21 March 1768 to 1830-40)

Mother: Lydia _____ (unknown to 17 August 1816)

Wife's Name:

PHOEBE MALSURY

Born: 25 May 1798

Died: 13 May 1841

Buried: unknown

Father: unknown

Mother: unknown

Issue:

1. Lydia Ann

Born: Where:

19 July 1818

2. Levi H. (or M.)

26 March 1820

3. Gilbert M.

25 October 1821 NJ

4. Joseph S.

28 December 1823 **Burlington Co., NJ**

5. John M.

26 June 1826 Cold Spring Hill, Burlington Co.

6. Abigail M.

26 February 1828 New Hanover Tp., Burlington Co.

7. Phoebe Ann

16 January 1830 New Hanover Tp., Burlington Co.

8. Amanda Melvina

20 June 1831 New Hanover Tp., Burlington Co.

9. Samuel Lewis

8 November 1834 Jacobstown, Burlington Co., NJ

10. Edna E.

7 January 1836 New Hanover Tp., Burlington Co.

11. Henry Clay

31 May 1839 New Hanover Tp., Burlington Co.

With MALSURY being a common name in central New Jersey, it is probable that John moved to NJ shortly after his mother's death with his father and siblings. It is known the family was moved by the spring of 1817 when John's father remarried.

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Rochester, NY 14620-2532

Re: Follow up on Query

I sent a query, copy enclosed, to your offices on August 17, 2004. My check number 2252, for \$25.00, was deposited to your bank account on October 25, 2004. To date I have not received any information regarding the results of the research requested. Can you please check your files and resend any information or letter that you sent earlier?

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Smith
2014 Valentine Street
Los Angeles, CA 90026
(323) 662 – 0151
Doctorbrian90046@yahoo.com